

to observe the intellectual faculty narrowed almost to a point, limited to a scanty number of the meanest class of ideas ; to find by repeated experiments that *his* kind of ideas could neither reach their understanding nor excite their curiosity; to see the ravenous appetite of wolves succeeded for a season by a stupefaction insensible even to the few interests which kindle the ardour of a savage; to witness loathsome habits occasionally diversified by abominable ceremonies; or to be for once the spectator of some of the circumstances attendant on the wars of savages.

But there are many more familiar illustrations of the extravagant estimate of means. One is, the expectation of far too much from mere direct instruction. This is indeed so general, that it will hardly be denominated romantic, except in the most excessive instances. Observe it, however, a moment in the concern of education. Nothing seems more evident than the influence of external circumstances, distinct from the regular discipline of the parent or tutor, in forming the character of youth. Nothing again seems more evident than that direct instruction, though an useful co-operator with the influence of these circumstances when they are auspicious, is a feeble counteractor if they be malignant. And yet this mere instruction is enough, in the account of thousands of parents, to lead the youth to wisdom and happiness ; even that very youth whom the united influence of almost all things else which he is exposed to see, and hear, and participate, is drawing, with the unrelaxing grasp of a fiend, to destruction.

A too sanguine opinion of the efficacy of instruction, has sometimes possessed those who teach from the pulpit. Till the dispensations of a better age shall be opened on the world, the measure of effect which may reasonably be expected from preaching, is to be determined by a view of the visible effects which are actually produced on congregations from week to week; and this view is far from flattering. One might appeal to preachers in general—What striking improvements are apparent in your societies ? When you inculcate charity on the Sunday, do the misers in your congregations liberally open their chests and purses to the distressed on Monday ? Might I not ask as well, whether the stones and trees really *did* move at the voice of Orpheus ? After you have unveiled even the scenes of eternity to the